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ABSTRACT

The Servicemen's Opportunity College (SOC) project seeks to identify and designate an extensive network of colleges and universities that are jointly and separately seeking to make postsecondary education available to men and women in military service in ways consistent with their service assignments. Colleges and universities genuinely responsive to the educational needs of men and women in service are asked to subscribe to criteria and policies in the areas of entrance requirements, increased study opportunity, completion of interrupted work, special academic assistance, credit for in-service educational experience, adaptable requirements, contract for degree, residence requirements, transfer policy, liaison, and promoting and continuing commitment. (MJM)

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SOC

FOUR-YEAR SERVICEMEN'S OPPORTUNITY COLLEGE

THE FOUR-YEAR SOC —

- A network of colleges and universities pledged to improve postsecondary educational opportunity for men and women in the Armed Services.
- A group of colleges and universities whose policies and procedures reflect ways in which it is possible to serve successfully men and women while they are in service.
- A cooperative project of thirteen higher education associations which represent more than 1200 member institutions.
- An extension of the successful two-year SOC launched by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, in 1972.
- Supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPE) and the Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, (DOD-OASD).

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FOUR-YEAR
SERVICEMEN'S OPPORTUNITY COLLEGE

COOPERATING AGENCIES

American Ass'n.of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers
American Ass'n. of Community & Junior Colleges
* American Ass'n. of St. Colleges & Universities
American Council on Education
Ass'n. of American Colleges
Ass'n. of American Universities
Council of Graduate Schools
Education Commission of the States
Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education
Nat'l. Ass'n. For Equal Opportunity in Higher Education
Nat'l. Ass'n. of St. Universities & Land-Grant Colleges
Nat'l. Commission on Accrediting
State Higher Education Executive Officers
Department of Defense - Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, (M&RA/E)
U.S. Air Force
U.S. Army
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FOUR-YEAR
SERVICEMEN'S OPPORTUNITY COLLEGE

The Servicemen's Opportunity College (SOC) project seeks to identify and designate an extensive network of colleges and universities which are jointly and separately seeking to make postsecondary education available to men and women in military service in ways consistent with their service assignments.

The following criteria focus on the range of problems, issues and barriers that affect the availability of postsecondary educational opportunity to service men and women. Policies, procedures and instructional style developed for civilians, largely between the ages of 18 and 24, who are expected to reside on campus for a period of years may prove to be barriers to the education of service men and women and may operate effectively to deny them access to postsecondary education during their service years.

The policies and procedures contained in the Four-Year Servicemen's Opportunity College (SOC) Criteria were derived from those colleges and universities that have made an effective effort to be responsive to the educational needs of service men and women. They recognize that the first responsibility of service personnel is to their service assignments and that the mobility and unpredictability of their duty assignments markedly reduce the availabity of conventional instruction to them and work against their orderly pursuit of an educational program which of necessity must often be taken in several colleges or universities.

Thus colleges and universities genuinely responsive to the educational needs of service men and women are asked to subscribe to these criteria and policies and make every effort to see that they are applied -- in instruction, in program advisement and counselling, in admission and transfer evaluation, in residency requirements.

Agreement to observe these criteria is requested for a two-year period to be subject to review in light of experience by the institution and the Servicemen's Opportunity College (SOC) designating agency.

CRITERIA

FOUR-YEAR SERVICEMEN'S OPPORTUNITY COLLEGE

Entrance Requirements

I. A Servicemen's Opportunity College (SOC) will have liberal entrance requirements.

- A high school diploma or equivalency based upon appropriate scores in the General Educational Development Tests is an adequate educational credential for enrollment in a degree program except in those instances where further qualifications are required of all students for institutional admission or for entry into a particular degree program.
- In those colleges not restricted by state or local regulations the above requirement may be waived and students evidencing unusual promise may be admitted despite lack of a high school diploma or equivalency certificate.
- An Associate Degree awarded by an accredited[1] institution will be completely transferable where appropriate to the major baccalaureate degree program to be pursued. Requirements of the major program may in some cases call for additional work, but repeating previously completed work will be avoided.
- In no instance will an individual be subjected to additional requirements because he or she is in service.

Increased Study Opportunity

II. A Servicemen's Opportunity College provides opportunities for service men and women to pursue educational programs through a variety of traditional and non-traditional means - on campus and on base, in a variety of instructional modes or delivery systems and at times appropriate to their duty assignments.

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[1] When accreditation of the transferring institution is pending the receiving institution may recognize all or part of an individual's work on a case-by-case basis.

Completion of Interrupted Work

III. A Servicemen's Opportunity College provides opportunities for service men and women to complete courses through special means or optional non-traditional modes especially when their course work is interrupted by military obligations.

Special Academic Assistance

IV. A Servicemen's Opportunity College provides special academic assistance to students in need of this assistance through:

- The designation of a trained "servicemen's counsellor"who is available at times and in locations convenient to service men and women and who will assist them in program planning and guide them in their understanding of all educational options available to them within the criteria observed by Servicemen's Opportunity Colleges.
- The availability of tutorial services or similar learning assistance at times and in locations convenient to service men and women.
- The consideration of implementing PREP programs sponsored by the institution at the base.

Credit for In-Service Educational Experience

V. A Servicemen's Opportunity College will provide maximum recognition of educational experiences obtained in the Armed Services. It will maximize recognition of such experiences consistent with standards of the programs it offers by the granting of credit for or exemption from courses relevant to a student's degree program by such policies as:

- The use of United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) courses.
- The use of the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), the College Proficiency Examination Program (CPEP), Advanced Placement (AP), institutional "challenge" examinations.
- The evaluation for credit of military educational experiences in accordance with their evaluation in the American Council on Education's 1968 Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services or by the Commission on the Accreditation of Service Experiences (CASE) evaluation service. (Credit recommendations for service educational experiences not included in the 1968 Guide may be obtained from CASE. A new Guide is to be available in June, 1974).

Credit for In-Service Educational Experience

V. (cont.)

- The exemption from or credit for required health or physical education courses for service men and women who have had at least one year of active military service.

- The acceptance of such non-traditional learning modes for the major portion of lower division requirements where appropriate and for upper division requirements to the extent such modes may be available or appropriate.

Adaptable Requirements

VI. A Servicemen's Opportunity College has requirements for in-residence or on-campus study including approval and sponsorship of a student's program which are adaptable to the mobility and special needs of service men and women.

- Residency requirements based upon time spent on campus or minimum credits to be earned from the institution may be fulfilled at any time within their programs.

- Residency requirements may be fulfilled by completion of any educational program sponsored by the institution whether offered on campus or off campus.

- Special options to satisfy residency requirements will be made available to service men and women. Institutions may consider the following options:

Contract for Degree

- A Contract for degree option may be made available to service men and women. They may contract with a Servicemen's Opportunity College at any appropriate time; usually the contract will be with the college of their initial enrollment. The college will designate an advisor, who will assist the service man or woman in contracting for a degree with the institution. The contract should specify the course of study to be pursued and appropriate learning options in accordance with the Four-Year Servicemen's Opportunity College criteria. Prior approval by the contracting institution will be required for work taken subsequently from another institution when the service man or woman is forced to transfer as a result of a change in duty assignment.

Adaptable Requirements

VI. (cont.)

As long as the service man or woman is being effectively guided by his or her advisor, transfer of appropriate credits earned at other institutions back to the original institution will be permitted -- in essence, a reverse transfer policy.

The institution agrees to provide a repository for all academic records of the individual. The contracting college will award the service man or woman the appropriate degree upon fulfillment of the contract.

Residence Requirements

- The college may waive or eliminate residency requirements for service men and women.
- Where residency requirements are restricted by state law, the college will make every effort to obtain an exemption for service men and women.

Transfer Policy

VII. A Servicemen's Opportunity College has a transfer policy that is generous in recognition of traditional and non-traditional learning obtained at other institutions and will accept as a minimum for transferring service personnel the level of credit applied by all regionally accredited colleges in which they have been enrolled in comparable programs when validated by subsequent individual success in traditional study modes.

Liaison

VIII. A Servicemen's Opportunity College is encouraged to provide for liaison with local Armed Forces representatives and other institutions serving the same base to provide appropriate coordination of the effort.

Promotion

IX. A Servicemen's Opportunity College will publicize and promote its SOC policies by inserting them in its college catalog and by other appropriate means.

Continuing Commitment

X. A Servicemen's Opportunity College will maintain its commitments to service men and women who enroll under these Criteria if for any reason it discontinues its status as a Servicemen's Opportunity College.